

Amendments to the Claims

Please replace the listing of claims as follows:

Claim 1 (currently amended): A printing blanket comprising:

a carrier sleeve layer having at least one axially convex surface, the carrier sleeve layer being rigid to maintain a tubular shape for the printing blanket; and
a print layer disposed over the carrier sleeve layer.

Claim 2 (original): The printing blanket as recited in claim 1 wherein the carrier sleeve layer is thicker in an axial middle than at axial ends.

Claim 3 (withdrawn): The printing blanket as recited in claim 1 wherein the carrier sleeve is of uniform thickness.

Claim 4 (original): The printing blanket as recited in claim 1 wherein the print layer has a uniform thickness.

Claim 5 (original): The printing blanket as recited in claim 1 wherein the print layer is gapless and tubular.

Claim 6 (currently amended): The printing blanket as recited in claim 1 wherein an outer surface of the print layer has a convex axial profile when the blanket is disposed on ~~the~~ a blanket cylinder without pressure.

Claim 7 (original): The printing blanket as recited in claim 1 wherein the blanket provides uniform axial print or nip pressure across the width of the blanket.

Claim 8 (original): The printing blanket as recited in claim 1 further including a compressible layer disposed between the carrier sleeve layer and the print layer.

Claim 9 (original): The printing blanket as recited in claim 8 further comprising an inextensible layer disposed over the compressible layer and underneath the print layer.

Claim 10 (original): The printing blanket as recited in claim 1 wherein the printing blanket has at least two axial image areas.

Claim 11 (original): The printing blanket as recited in claim 10 wherein the printing blanket has at least three axial image areas.

Claim 12 (currently amended): An offset printing press comprising:
an image cylinder;
a blanket cylinder; and
a printing blanket having a carrier sleeve layer being rigid to maintain a tubular shape for the printing blanket and having at least one axially convex surface and a print layer disposed over the carrier sleeve layer.

Claim 13 (original): The offset printing press as recited in claim 12 wherein the printing press is a lithographic web printing press.

Claim 14 (original): The offset printing press as recited in claim 12 wherein the image cylinder has at least two axial image areas.

Claims 15 and 16 (canceled).

Claim 17 (withdrawn): The offset printing press as recited in claim 12 wherein the image cylinder has at least two axial image areas.

Claims 18 and 19 (canceled).

Claim 20 (new): A printing blanket comprising:

a carrier sleeve layer having at least one axially convex surface, the carrier sleeve layer being an innermost layer of the printing blanket; and
a print layer disposed over the carrier sleeve layer.

Claim 21 (new): A printing blanket comprising:
a carrier sleeve layer having at least one axially convex surface; and
a print layer disposed over the carrier sleeve layer;
wherein an outer surface of the print layer has a convex axial profile when the blanket is disposed on a blanket cylinder without pressure.

Claim 22 (new): A printing blanket comprising:
a carrier sleeve layer having at least one axially convex surface; and
a print layer disposed over the carrier sleeve layer; and
a compressible layer disposed between the carrier sleeve layer and the print layer.

Claim 23 (new): The printing blanket as recited in claim 22 further comprising an inextensible layer disposed over the compressible layer and underneath the print layer.

Claim 24 (new): The printing blanket as recited in claim 1 wherein the carrier sleeve layer is made of fiberglass.